

WHO ARE THE MEDIATORS AND WHAT TRAINING IS OFFERED?

DSP mediators are volunteers within our community who give their time to assist disputants in resolving their conflicts. DSP mediators complete a two-day, 16-hour Basic Mediation course on conflict resolution and mediation skills before they begin their apprenticeship, which includes case observation and actual mediation experience.

DOES DSP PROVIDE OTHER TYPES OF TRAINING?

DSP provides training in the following areas:

- Basic mediation
- Conflict awareness skills
- Diversity
- Peer mediation

If you are interested in scheduling mediation, attending a training session or becoming a volunteer mediator, please contact us at 704-336-2903 or visit charlottenc.gov/communityrelations.



Community Relations empowers, collaborates, engages and promotes opportunities to create positive outcomes.

Community Relations Mission Statement

**EMPOWER
COLLABORATE
ENGAGE**

The City of Charlotte does not discriminate on the basis of disability. We will provide auxiliary aids and services, written materials in alternative formats, and reasonable modifications in policies and procedures to persons with disabilities upon request. To make a request, please call 704-336-1297.



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CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG
COMMUNITY RELATIONS




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DISPUTE SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

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Since 1983, the Community Relations Dispute Settlement Program (DSP) has been providing mediation and conciliation services to Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents.

WHAT IS MEDIATION?

Mediation is an informal process of dispute resolution where a neutral third party (the mediator) assists two or more parties in reaching a mutually acceptable resolution to their dispute. The ultimate decision-making authority rests with the parties themselves. The mediator is not a judge, lawyer or counselor; rather, the mediator is a skilled facilitator who assists the disputants in:

- Defining and clarifying issues
- Reducing obstacles to communication
- Exploring possible solutions
- Reaching a mutually satisfactory agreement

BENEFITS OF MEDIATION

For disputing parties:

- Provides disputants with an opportunity to make their own decisions
- Can be an avenue for payment of restitution for damages or losses
- Is an alternative to court conviction or other court actions
- Offers disputants an opportunity to talk openly and have questions answered
- Saves court costs and the disputants' time

To the community:

- Empowers the community to solve some of its own problems
- Offers hope for a more peaceful community by introducing conflict resolution as a means to resolve disputes



- Reduces taxpayer costs by removing cases from court dockets
- Expedites more serious cases through the criminal justice system

TYPES OF DISPUTES MEDIATED THROUGH DSP

DSP provides mediation services in cases involving:

- Misdemeanor criminal complaints, including those that involve juvenile offenders, such as damage to property, larceny, assault, communicating threats and harassment
- 50C No contact orders
- Neighborhood conflicts
- Consumer complaints
- Conflicts between co-workers
- Employer/employee disputes
- Student issues/truancy
- Landlord tenant concerns
- Medicaid appeals
- Miscellaneous conflicts

DSP *does not* handle the following kinds of cases:

- Domestic violence
- Felony offenses
- Divorce
- Child custody

HOW SUCCESSFUL IS MEDIATION?

Mediation can be a quicker and more thorough resolution to a variety of disputes. In fact, 85-90 percent of the conflicts mediated in the Community Relations Dispute Settlement Program are resolved with an agreement mutually acceptable to all parties involved.

IS THERE A FEE FOR MEDIATION?

Mediation services through DSP are always FREE. There is a reduced court fee that is paid after a successful mediation to have court involved cases dismissed without a conviction on a person's record.

CASE REFERRAL TO MEDIATION

Any party involved in a dispute may contact the Dispute Settlement Program for assistance before any kind of formal complaint is filed. Cases are also referred for mediation from the following agencies:

- District Attorney's Office
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department
- Criminal Magistrate's Office
- Consumer Protection Service N.C. Attorney General
- Animal Control
- Department of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
- Self-referrals